

A STUDY

OF THE

BOOK OF ACTS

TEACHER'S MANUAL

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STUDY OF ACTS

(Teacher's Instructions)

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Introduction

This study of Acts is designed primarily as a home study for new Christians. Although the instructions are aimed at a home study, the material could be used in a formal class study with proper handling by the teacher.

Review with the pupil the historical information available on Acts, author, purpose, time written, to whom written, and brief outline of contents. Point out that Acts is the backbone or skeleton of the New Testament. It contains the history of the early church and examples of conversions as patterns for us today. Many of the other books of the New Testament were written during the time period covered by Acts. Stress the necessity of following the pattern set by the early church under the direction of the apostles.

The pupil should read the lesson and fill out the worksheets prior to the study. The worksheets are designed to force the pupil to read the lesson closely and in some cases to draw conclusions. The questions draw out facts, but are not always designed to tie the facts together. **Your task as a teacher is to tie these facts together** and make sure that the pupil understands the concepts behind the facts. Draw out the thoughts and summarize the contents in each lesson. Don't leave him with a handful of disjointed facts.

In the study read the entire lesson text. Then go back, reread, and discuss a paragraph at a time. Do your best to ask the pupil key questions that will help him form his own conclusions as to what the passage means. Even though you may have much background information from commentaries and from your own study, do not just pour it all out on him. He will not remember it nearly as well as he will if you guide him to discovering it himself. Of course, there is some external support information which is not evident from the scripture, and which you must therefore present to him.

The pupil should be instructed to study each lesson and answer as many questions on his worksheet as possible prior to the class. The class discussion should clear up many unanswered questions. The pupil should go back during the next week reviewing all answers and completing or correcting the worksheet if there were errors or incomplete answers. Each lesson text is supposed to be covered twice: first, during the reading and discussion and second, during the review of the worksheet at the next session. **Please do not review the worksheet the same evening as the discussion.** Review it prior to starting the discussion of the next lesson text.

Many lesson texts are approximately one chapter in length. Several, however, are longer (i.e. Lesson 7, Chapters 9: 1-31, 22: 1-21 and 26: 1-23) because they cover common material and may take more than one class period to adequately cover.

It is very important that you review the pupil's answers on the worksheet for each lesson at the next class session for several reasons: (1) To be sure he properly understood the passage of scripture concerned. (2) Because he took the time to prepare his lesson (It is frustrating to work on a lesson and then have the teacher show no interest in your results). (3) It gives him a chance to correct any incorrect answers. (4) It is an excellent review prior to the next text discussion.

Always start each study by asking if he has any questions and try to answer them if possible. If you don't know the answers, write down the questions and get the answers from someone, or look it up yourself before the next study. You may find times that you can't get to the lesson because of questions. This is OK, the pupil's satisfaction in getting information he feels he needs is more important than the formal study many times. Just don't let the pupil keep you totally disorganized so that he never gets the planned lessons. Sometimes you can defer an answer without the pupil becoming upset when the pupil knows it will be covered soon in formal study.

The comments on each lesson point out key thoughts which should be given special consideration in your preparation and should be thoroughly expanded in your discussion with the pupil. Be sure to use a Bible with maps and a commentary on Acts if you have one.

if you have any comments or suggestions which will improve the lesson, or these instructions, please provide them (in writing, so they will have a better chance of survival) to permit changes the next time they are printed.

Good luck. Contact me if you have any problems.

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Lesson 1 - Acts 1

1. Give historical background on Acts and where it fits into the New Testament picture using the chart supplied (use chart in workbook).
2. Author - Luke - a Greek physician convert who traveled with Paul. Also wrote the Gospel of Luke (Luke 1:14).
3. Period - A.D. 29 to A.D. 63 - Christ was born 4 B.C. - 33 years old at death.
4. 1:1 Addressed to Theophilus (Greek for 'friend of God') - a Greek official (addressed as 'Most Excellent') Luke 1:3
5. There are 13 appearances of Christ after resurrection.
6. 1:4 Commanded to stay in Jerusalem till power comes. Lk. 24:46-49, Acts 1:4
7. 1:5 Baptize - metaphorical meaning of "baptize" is to overwhelm (when submersed you are overwhelmed by water). The Apostles were overwhelmed.

8. Review the establishment of the Kingdom, which is the church. This should show that the Kingdom was near (at hand) in the Gospels (Matt. 3:1-2, 6:10, Mark 9:1), the prophecies of it coming with power (John 16:13, John 14:26, Acts 1:8), the fulfillment of these prophecies (Acts 2:4) and the fact that Christians are in the Kingdom (Col. 1:13). This is to combat the false theories of premillennialism. Premillennialists teach Christ was thwarted in his attempt to set up the Kingdom and substituted the church at the last minute and will come back to set up his kingdom at a later date and reign in Jerusalem for 1,000 years. The Kingdom/church was established in Acts 2.

9. Apostles received inspiration with the Power/Baptism of the Holy Spirit, John 16:13, John 14:26.
10. 1:5 Holy Spirit Baptism was a promise to the Apostles, not a command. Christian baptism commanded in Matt. 28:19 is water baptism to be administered by men. Holy Spirit Baptism is administered by God and only occurred two times (Acts 2 and Acts 10) in the Bible.
11. 1:11 Men of Galilee - all Apostles but Judas (who was now dead) were from Galilee - 5 from Bethsaida.
12. 1:12 Sabbath day's journey - "7/8 mile - to walk more was considered work. (2,000 paces - 1.4 km)"
13. 1:19 Hakeldama - a Hebrew word which required translation into Greek, in which Luke was writing, in order to be understood by Theophilus.
14. 1:20 12 Apostles needed - 12 a number showing completeness - 12 tribes, etc, Symbolism.
15. 1:26 Lots - like dice - sometimes wooden chips in bottle with narrow neck. Only 1 could come out at a time when filled with water.

Lesson 2 - Acts 2

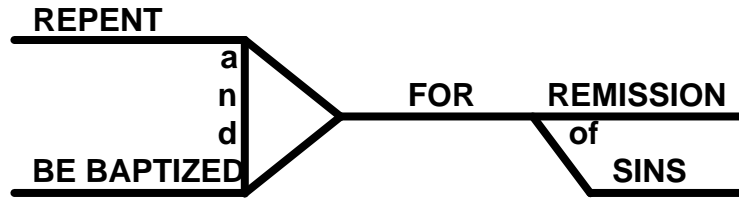
1. 2:1 Pentecost - Greek term (fiftieth) - 50 days after Passover - "Feast of Weeks" - also called "Feast of Harvest". Each family offered two loaves of fine wheat flour. Jews could not eat of their wheat harvest until then. It was one of three feasts at which all males were required to be present - Ex. 23:14-17.

These are:

- a. Feast of Unleavened Bread
- b. Feast of Harvest
- c. Feast of Ingathering

Pentecost was the day that the law was given on Mt. Sinai and day the apostles received inspiration.

2. 2:1 Day fully came - day light - day started at dusk the evening before in Jewish time.
3. 2:1 Those in the room were apostles - "apostles" is the antecedent to "they" in verse 2, not the 120 in verse 15 of Chapter 1. Only the Apostles were baptized by the Holy Spirit.
4. 2:4 Spoke in foreign languages - "unknown" tongues in I Cor. 14 are foreign languages - "*unknown*" in italics in some translations is not in Greek text. It was added by the translators to indicate a language in which the speaker had not been trained, not a babbling which no one knew. That this was languages was evidenced by the fact that each person heard in his own native language (tongue) - 15 countries were represented.
5. Peter used this opportunity to use the "Keys of the Kingdom" Matt. 16:16-19 to open the doors of the Kingdom (church). (i.e .He told the public for the first time what the conditions of entry into the church were).
6. 2:16 Joel prophecy - the Spirit was to be poured out on all "flesh" (people - mankind). This is not a prophecy that this will happen to each person but that the Spirit will not be restricted to Jews only. In this incident, it was poured out on Jews to introduce the church to the Jews. In Acts 10 it was poured out on Gentiles completing the prophecy while introducing the church to the Gentiles.
7. 2:27 Christ did not stay in Hades (The abode of the dead). Explain Hades.



When asked about “Repentance”, Calvinists agree that Repentance is necessary for salvation. Therefore, although they don’t realize it, they try to make “for” in this verse have two different meanings as follows: Repent “in order” to have remission (forgiveness) and be baptized “because” your sins have been forgiven. This violates the rules of any language. No word can have two different meanings at the same time. “And” , (+), in verse 38 is a coordinating conjunction which joins two items of equal importance and “for” , (=), applies to both of them equally.

Repentance + Baptism = Forgiveness

10. 2:38 In the Greek text, the “gift of the Holy Spirit” is a gift which is the Holy Spirit , not a gift from the Holy Spirit. This is the “indwelling” of God’s Spirit which comes into each Christian’s heart when they are baptized.
11. 2:42 “breaking of bread” - communion
12. 2:46 “breaking of bread” - common meal
13. 2:45 Shared as need arose - had come for the Feast of Pentecost, planning to then go home. Were not financially prepared to stay and learn about their new religion.

Lesson 3 - Acts 3, 4:1-31

1. 3:1,2 3PM at the “Beautiful Gate” - 50’ (15m) high and 40’ (12m) wide. Covered with gold and Corinthian brass - the most favorite entrance into the temple.
2. 3:6 Nazarene and Nazarite (different). Nazarene - from Nazareth. Nazarite - one who took the Nazarite vow (no product of the grape and no hair cut).
3. 3:8 Healing instantaneous and complete.
4. 3:10,11 People amazed.
5. 3:12-16 God given credit - Peter’s second sermon.
6. 3:16 Who had faith? Apostles or the man? No mention of faith on man’s part. It was not required by the apostles that he have faith. Apostles had to lift him up. See Matt. 17:14-20 - Matt. 8:5-13. Modern faith healers attribute lack of healing to lack of faith on the part of the person being healed.
7. 3:19 Repent and turn again (be converted - active, not passive, change in your way - attitude) and turn to Lord (by being immersed - Acts 2:38) (II Cor. 7:9-10 - change of will produced by godly sorrow

which leads to reformation).

- a. That your sins be blotted out (Acts 2:38).
- b. Seasons of refreshing (relief from sin).
- c. Send Jesus into their heart. When Jesus dwells in us, God's Spirit (Holy Spirit) is also in us. They are one and cannot be separated.

8. Note the parallel nature of:

Acts 2:38	Repent and be baptized (in water) and receive forgiveness and Holy Spirit.
Acts 3:19	Repent and be converted (changed - born again).
John 3:3-5	Be born again - of water and of spirit.
Rom. 6:3-6	Buried by baptism (in water) - die to sin - raised to new life (born again).
I Pet 3:20-21	Saved by baptism (in water) not by physical washing, but by obedience (clean conscience resulting from obeying God).
Acts 22:16	Be baptized (in water) - wash away sins (born again).
Eph. 5:25-26	Those in His body (church) have been sanctified and cleansed by a washing of water (baptism) with the word (by the authority of the word).

9. Point out that only apostles at this point in time in the early church history had the power to work miracles, although all Christians had received the (indwelling) Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). Having the indwelling Holy Spirit, as received at baptism, did not give one the power to perform miracles. Such power had to come from the laying on the apostles' hands. (Acts Chapter 8).

10. Where are Spiritual Blessings (refreshings)? Eph. 1:3
How do we get there? Gal. 3:26-27

11. 3:22 How was Christ like Moses? He was a lawgiver.

12. 3:23 What will happen if we fail to heed the lawgiver?

13. 3:24-26 Christ - fulfillment of this prophecy

14. 3:26 "For you first" - to the Jews first. Not preached to Gentiles for about 10 years.

15. 4:1 Sadducees - Small, elite, wealthy, liberal, exercised great political power, party of priesthood - followed Pentateuch primarily. Denied angels, spirits and resurrection. (Similar to the social position of Episcopalians in USA today), (Not in Russian version).

Pharisees - 6,000 men, closed society, majority of common people followed their beliefs. Were chief persecutors of Christ. Strict adherence to the law. Christ condemned them for making so many laws not in God's Word and for following them hypocritically. Matt. 23:13-36.

16. 4:1-3 The reason that they were upset was the teaching on the resurrection. If Christ and the apostles had just gone about doing good, there wouldn't have been much of a problem. However, the apostles found it necessary to correct error. We today must point out error as well as going about doing good.
17. 4:4 5,000 men (more including women)
18. 4:6 Caiaphas was High Priest recognized by Romans (they installed him). Annas, his father-in-law, was recognized by Jews as the legitimate High Priest.
19. 4:8 Having just been filled with Holy Spirit.
20. 4:10 Healing done in name of Jesus.
21. 4:11 Christ rejected. Ps. 118:22 Eph. 2:19-22
22. 4:12 Salvation in no other name. I Cor. 1:10-13. We should not wear any other name.
23. 4:13 Uneducated, not scholars, ignorant, laymen, not professionals. Recognized them as having been with Jesus. Can others recognize that you have been associated with Jesus by your life?
24. 4:14-16 Speechless - couldn't refute the miracle. How do we handle this? We cannot deny it.
25. 4:17-19 Threatened them - commanded not to teach. Judge yourself - should we obey God or men? (Acts 5:29)
26. 4:21 Scared of public reaction.
27. 4:31 Filled with the Spirit - allowing the Spirit to work in them fully enthused (like after a pep rally) - Ready to tackle anything in spite of persecution.

Lesson 4 - Acts 4:32-37, 5

1. 4:32 All things in common (no selfishness). Distributed to meet needs. Not equally divided (not communism). Believers (Christians), as a general statement, gave houses, land, etc. There could be exceptions. There is no indication that they sold their homes. Then specific examples are given of three believers. Point out that the Bible lists these as believers (Christians - saved people) and that two sinned and died because of their sin. This is for the benefit of those who believe in eternal security (once saved, always saved). Remind the student as to the special need (see notes on Acts 2:45).
2. 4:36-37 Specific example - Barnabas - Son of encouragement, Son of consolation, Son of exhortation. He had no family (no wife, etc.) I Cor. 9:6.
3. 4:33 Apostles performing miracles (Acts 2:43). Only apostles could perform miracles at this time..
4. 5:1-5 Continuation of Specific examples - Ananias and Sapphira were believers (Acts 4:32) (Christians) - Lessons - Christians can sin and be lost (contrary to Calvin's teaching otherwise). They desired praise of fellow believers. This was a special contribution. Not during regular worship service. Regular contributions are in worship service. I Cor. 16:2. They did not have to give

all. God's judgment was immediate (Lev. 10:1-7). Buried without fanfare.

Conclusions: Christians can sin - Contributions can be made other than in the Sunday worship service.

5. 5:11 Discipline sometimes needed to get peoples' attention (Heb. 10:31).
6. 5:12 Miracles only being performed by Apostles. Christians met at the temple (Solomon's Porch).
7. 5:14 Many converted.
8. 5:15 Superstition - no indication that Peter's shadow healed.
9. 5:17 As noted before the priests were primarily Sadducees.
10. 5:21 Council (Sanhedrin) - Supreme Court of Jews made up of 71 members. Both Sadducees and Pharisees.
11. 5:26 Concern for public opinion.
12. 5:29 We must obey God when there is a conflict with civil government. Otherwise, we are obligated to obey the civil authorities. Romans 13:1-7 - it is a sin to disobey the Law (v. 2).
13. 5:31 Christ has been exalted as Prince and Savior to cause Israel to change direction (turn again - repent) and receive forgiveness.
14. 5:32 The Holy Spirit is given to all who obey God (primary obedience in becoming Christians - Acts 2:38).
15. 5:33 Kill your opposition to silence them.
16. 5:34-39 Gamaliel - very famous doctor of the law. Apostle Paul's teacher Acts 22:3. Don't fight God - His will prevail.
17. 5:40-42 Proud to suffer for Christ. Continued to preach though threatened. We need to be this dedicated also.

Lesson 5 - Acts 6, 7

1. Note Up to this point, all miracles had been done by Apostles - Acts 2:38, Acts 2:43, Acts 3:7, Acts 5: 12. Although all Christians receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (the indwelling of the Spirit at baptism), it does not empower them to perform miracles. The apostles could do this because they received "Power" when baptized with the Holy Spirit.
2. 6:1-4 First church problem - Neglect of Hellenistic (Grecian) widows. Qualification for Servers include "full of Holy Spirit" - nothing miraculous but they allowed God's Spirit to work through their lives in a mighty manner.
Daily Servings - distribution as needed (Acts 4:32) not divided among all.
3. 6:5-6 All are Grecian names (selected from the party complaining). First example of Apostolic laying on of hands. Common for appointment. First Deacons.
4. 6:7 Priests obeyed (baptized) - Probably one of the most significant

events. When the ministers start leaving a religion, it is in trouble.

Obey Gospel (faith) II Thess. 1:7-9. What is the Gospel? I Cor. 15:1-4
Death, burial and resurrection of Christ. We obey by reenacting this. Dying
to sin, Buried in Baptism, Raised to a new life - Rom. 6:1-11

5. 6:8 Stephen, full of (grace) faith, and power performed miracles (signs - Greek miracles. First example of a convert speaking in behalf of their new religion.
- 6 6:9 With his new power, Stephen incurs the wrath of the Jews. The indication was that he had not been doing these things before. Foreign Jews (Synagogue of Freedmen - former slaves).
7. 6:10-15 Unable to answer his arguments so they had men lie about them and stirred up the people. This is the first time the common people have been aroused. Since the Apostle Paul (Saul) Acts 7:50) was a part of the crowd, this was probably by the Pharisees.
8. 6:14 John 2:19-22
9. 7:2-53 Stephen's defense of the Gospel - Brief history of the Hebrews
10. 7:27-28 Rejection of God's appointed leader.
11. 7:37-39 Christ would be a prophet like Moses (a lawgiver) vs. 38, Christ was there in the wilderness.
12. 7:43 Moloch - a god to whom they offered children as sacrifice (burnt). To pass through the fire of Moloch was to offer children.
13. 7:58 The witnesses were to cast the first stone. Stoning was not permitted inside the city.
14. 7:50 Luke 23:34 - Similar to Christ's word on Cross. "fell asleep" in Greek "Expired"
(Not in Russian version)

Lesson 6 Acts 8

1. 8:1 Saul (Paul) Acts 13:9 - First wholesale persecution of church. Christians fled leaving Apostles in Jerusalem.
2. 8:4 Went about evangelizing (every one - not just ministers, elders, etc.)

Persecution - 1) Tends to promote and strengthen that which it seeks to destroy.

- 2) One of the best ways to have an active church is to persecute it.
- 3) All Christians should spread Gospel.
- 4) Christians should be zealous when away from home as well as at home.

3. 8:5 Verse 4 was a general statement. Verse 5 gives a specific example.

4. 8:6 Philip confirmed his preaching with miracles (signs - Greek “attesting miracles”)
5. 8:9-13 Simon - a sorcerer. People believed he possessed the power of God.
6. 8:12 Many believed and were baptized. This is a general statement.
7. 8:13 Specific example:
Simon believed and was baptized. There is no distinction made by the Holy Spirit here between what Simon did and what the other Samaritans did. Some commentators (with Calvinistic theology) imply that his conversion was feigned because of the Calvinistic doctrine of eternal security (once saved - always saved).

For the benefit of the eternal security believers: Show that Simon believed (enough for the Calvinist’s crowd) and was baptized (became a Christian) and then sinned. He was not told to believe (as the Calvinists teach) again because “he was never saved” (like the eternal security believers feel) but instead he was given God’s second law of pardon, which is repentance and prayer for those saved and in the Church.

Have them read I John, chapter 1, and discuss. This passage was written to Christians by John, not to non-Christians, and it says we all sin. If Simon were not yet a Christian (if his belief and baptism were invalid), Peter would have told him to believe and be baptized along with his repentance, instead of to just repent and pray (Acts 8:22)

- 8 8:14-24
 - 1) Simon and others had had their sins forgiven and received the gift of the Holy Spirit - Acts 2:38. They had no miraculous powers. Only the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.
 - 2) In spite of them having the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the Church in Jerusalem sent Peter and John to impart the Holy Spirit (Miraculous measure). The Holy Spirit had not “fallen” on them. “Fallen” implies more than the simple “indwelling” of the Spirit.
 - 3) Prior to Peter and John laying hands on them, none of them could perform miracles.
 - 4) Point out that only after the laying on of an apostle’s hand could one perform miracles. It cannot be assumed that Stephen and Philip, received the power from the laying on of hands in Acts 6:6, however, it is only after that point in time that we find persons other than apostles performing miracles, and we know from Acts 8:17 that such gifts come from the laying on of apostles’ hands. It is also to be noted here that Philip could not pass this gift on to others. It took an apostle to do that. That is why Peter and John were sent.
 - 5) Point out why the Samaritans needed gifts like “knowledge”, etc. (They had no written word to read and to remember, and Philip was going to leave shortly [end of chapter]).
 - 6) Point out that people (even today) can perform what appears to

be miracles and convince others that they have the power of God.

9. Conclusions:

- 1) The chief object of the apostles' visit was to impart the Holy Spirit. It could not be obtained by Philip even though the apostles had laid their hands on him (Acts 6:6). Acts 19:6 is another example. There is no example of anyone other than an apostle laying hands on and giving gifts of the Spirit. The ability to pass on gifts ceased with the death of the apostles.
- 2) These Samaritan Christians enjoyed pardon of sins and membership in the Church before receiving miraculous gifts. Parallel account.
 - a. Romans were Saints (Christians), God's beloved - Rom. 1:6. They had great faith - Rom. 1:8
 - b. The Romans had the indwelling of the Spirit - Rom. 8:9-15. Anyone who belongs to Christ (a Christian) has the Spirit (Acts 2:38). We become Christians when we put him on in baptism because of our faith - Gal. 3:26-27.
 - c. In spite of being Christians and having the Spirit, they did not have the miraculous gifts of the Spirit as Paul stated to them (in Rom. 1:11) that he desired to come to visit them that he might impart some spiritual gift to them that they might be "established". They did not have the New Testament as it was not complete. During this period, Christians relied upon miracles to support the spoken word.
 - d. Water and jar examples are analogies to illustrate the different measures (aspects) of the Holy Spirit.

10. 8:25 With Spiritual Gifts having been given to the infant church to strengthen it, they went on to other villages.
11. 8:26 Jerusalem was on a mountain - up to Jerusalem, down to Samaria, Gaza, etc.
12. 8:27 eunuch - Originally an emasculated male at the King's Court to care for his harem. Later the King's Court members (advisors, cabinet, etc.). This man was probably a proselyte to Judaism.
13. 8:28-31 God did not deal with the eunuch directly. The Gospel has been committed to human vessels. At times we need help in understanding God's Word.
14. 8:32-33 Isa. 53:7-8
15. 8:35 What does it mean to preach Jesus?

- Samaritans believed and were baptized - Acts 8
16. 8:36 Eunuch wanted to be baptized
- 16a. 8:37 This verse is not in many of the older manuscripts but it was shown to Ireneas AD 170. Obviously, it was the practice at that time. (not in Russian version).
17. 8:38 Did not need to go down into the water if sprinkled or poured. Would have had water for drinking in chariot. Note: Catholic Church does not sprinkle, they pour. Review Rom. 6:3-6 on the form of baptism.
18. 8:39 Philip miraculously removed.

Lesson 7 - Acts 9:1-31, 22:1-21 and 26:1-23

1. 9:1 Saul - born - 3 AD, Tarsus of Cilicia, Tribe of Benjamin, pious parents (Pharisees), tent maker by training. He was a Roman citizen by birth (Acts 22:28). Tarsus was a "free city" by declaration of Julius Caesar because it sided with him during the Civil wars of Rome. Cilicia noted for fine goats' hair which was used for tents. Learned Aramaic (a dialect from captivity in Babylon similar to Hebrew) at home and Greek in the community. When old enough (?) sent to Jerusalem to study under Gamaliel the famous teacher (Pharisee) of the Law. Advanced faster than his peers in Jerusalem, Gal. 1:14.
2. 22:6, 26:15 Saul recognizes he is dealing with a supreme being in his question, "Who are you, Lord?"
3. 22:10 Recognizing him as Jesus, Saul calls upon him as "Lord" in asking what he must do.
4. 22:10, 9:9 Sins had not yet been forgiven. Spent three days in fasting (prayer implied as it always accompanied fasting). He was sent to Damascus where he would be told what he needed to do.
5. 9:12 Laying on of Ananias' hands was for Saul to regain his sight.
6. 22:13 Not to impart Holy Spirit. Only apostles could give gifts of Spirit (Acts 8:18) Indwelling of the Spirit would come with his baptism (Acts 2:38).
7. 22:16 Baptism is that final act (preceded by faith and repentance, etc.) that washes away sin and places us as a new (clean) creature in Christ (Gal. 3:27). Calling on the name of the Lord (as the "Faith Only" believe), did not save Paul. Calling on the name of the Lord is like "open in the name of the law". In other words, "in the name of" or "calling on the name of" means "by the authority of".
8. 9:15; 22:21; 26:15-18 Commission to go to Gentiles.
9. The Apostle Paul is the best example available of a person who believed in God, was zealous for God's ways (as he understood them), had a good

conscience because he thought he was right (had good intentions), but was lost. This teaches us that although the intent of our heart may be good and we may be morally good and we may be zealously following God (as we perceive it), we could be in a lost condition.

Lesson 8 - Acts 9:32 through 11:10

1. 9:34 Healing instantaneous (not like some “so called healing” by modern faithhealers where the healing comes later).
2. 9:35 Plain of Sharon between Joppa and Caesarea. Lydda about 10 miles from Joppa.
3. 9:36 Tabitha (Hebrew) - Dorcas (Greek) - Gazelle (English) - Chamois (Russian) - this is an illustration of the fact Acts is written in Greek and a Greek reader needs translation of Hebrew terms.
4. 10:1 Caesarea named after Caesar Augustus. Cornelius (Latin-Roman name) a Centurion - company commander – captain of 100 men.
5. 10:2 Although a devout man who prayed to God, he was lost. Acts 11:14
6. 10:9 House tops were flat - little rain
7. 10:10-16 Reluctant to eat things unclean. Message was that Gentiles who were considered unclean would now be acceptable to God.
8. 10:44-45 Baptism of Holy Spirit - not for salvation. Salvation would come because of their belief (Acts 10:43) and obedience in baptism (Acts 2:38).

Point out that this completed the fulfillment of the prophecy from Joel referenced in Acts 2. There were two types of flesh (people) as far as the Jews were concerned, Jew and Gentile. In Acts 2, the spirit was poured out on Jews and in Acts 10 on Gentiles. This was to convince the Jews that God would now accept all people, not just Jews only. Although Cornelius was baptized with the Holy Spirit, he did not receive the same benefits as did the apostles. There is no indication that Cornelius was inspired. He had not been promised the baptism of the Holy Spirit for the same purpose as had the apostles, nor is there any indication that the tongues speaking was to be a permanent gift.

Point out that baptize has a metaphorical meaning “to overwhelm”. For example if you are immersed in water, you are overwhelmed by water.

Christ promised power and inspiration to the apostles (Lesson 1) which would come when they were overwhelmed (baptized) by the Holy Spirit. Both of these were never promised to anyone other than the apostles. Both the apostles and Cornelius were overwhelmed by the Holy Spirit, and both spoke

in tongues (foreign languages, understood by others) but there the similarity stops. Point out that the baptism of the Holy Spirit only occurs twice in the New Testament, here and in Acts 2.

If there are still major questions on the Holy Spirit, study this more at your next study instead of proceeding to Lesson 9.

9. 10:46 Those baptized in water were those who had been baptized by Holy Spirit and who spoke in foreign languages. This obviously did not include infants. This cannot be used as a proof text for infant baptism.

Lesson 9 - Acts 11:19-20, 12

1. 11:19 Reread Acts 8:1-4 for setting. The word was being preached to Jews only.
2. 11:20 The church in Antioch quickly became a strong influence for Gentiles.
3. 11:22 Barnabas - refer back to notes on Chapter 4.
4. 11:26 Called "Christians" - Isaiah prophesied that God's people would be given a new name.

Saint - A general term used to describe a sanctified (cleansed) person who follows God. Used in both Old and New Testaments.

Disciple - A follower (learner) of another (Moses, John the Baptist, etc. all had disciples). Another general term used in both the Old and New Testaments.

Brethren - Referring to those in the family of God. Another general term used in both testaments.

Christian - Those belonging to Christ ("Christian"). A new specific term.

All of these terms are appropriate for Christians. I Cor. 1:10-15. I Cor. 3:1-8 condemn the use of human names that divide the body (church) of Christ. Names associated with either characteristics such as organization (Presbyterian) or practices (Baptism) are just as wrong as they divide the body of Christ.

5. 12:1 Herod - Herod Agrippa I, Grandson of the Herod who killed the infants in Bethlehem (Matt. 2:16), and Nephew of Herod the Tetrarch who beheaded John the Baptist.

6. 12:2 James - the first Apostle to die. His brother John was the last to die after writing Revelation (AD 95). Not the James who wrote the Epistle of James.
7. 12:4 Four squads (Quaternion) - 16 men total
8. 12:6 Bound by chains to his guards. Extraordinary precaution had been taken to keep Peter under guard.
9. 12:5, 14-16 They did not believe that their prayers had been answered.
10. 12:12 Mary was kin to Barnabas - Col. 4:10. John Mark, the author of Gospel of Mark.
11. 12:18-19 Roman law required the life of those who let prisoners escape.
12. 12:25 John Mark joins Barnabas and Saul. This is the beginning of the first missionary team.

Lesson 10 - Acts 13

1. 13:1 Jewish custom was to list people in order of importance. Barnabas was first. Saul was not yet recognized as a great teacher. Manaen, a foster brother to Herod the Tetrarch who beheaded John the Baptist. Antioch (in Syria) was the church who sponsored Paul's missionary journeys. It had a strong Gentile contingent.
2. 13:2 Barnabas and Saul called to the first missionary journey. About A.D. 45.
3. 13:3 Laying on of hands was a customary way to appoint people to specific offices or tasks.
4. 13:5 They went to the synagogues to preach to the Jews first. This was always Paul's practice. Once they were rejected by the Jews, then they went to the Gentiles in a city.
5. 13:5 John Mark went as their helper.
6. 13:6-7 Many officials retained magicians and sorcerers as advisors. "Bar-Jesus" means "son of Jesus". Bar - son of. Other examples O (Irish), Mac (Scottish) means son of (Not in Russian version).
7. 13:9 Saul's name changed to Paul. At this point he exercised his calling as an Apostle and took the lead. From here they are most frequently called Paul and Barnabas. Paul is a Latin name.
8. 13:11 Paul uses his miraculous powers as an Apostle.
9. 13:12 Paul may have adopted the Latin name (Paulus) of his first convert. It was advantageous to have a Latin name in going to the Gentiles.
10. 13:13 John Mark deserted them here. We will hear more of this later.
11. 13:16-41 Paul's sermon on Jewish history is very similar to Stephen's sermon in Acts 7.
12. 13:43 Proselytes - Gentiles converted to Judaism.
13. 13:45-46 Jewish leaders saw a threat to their leadership and began opposing Paul.

Paul and Barnabas then went to the Gentiles.

14. 13:48-50 The success that Paul had with the Gentiles caused the Jews to instigate a persecution that drove them out of the area.
15. 13:51 "Shake dust off feet" - a sign of contempt.

Lesson 11 (Acts 14, 15:1-35)

1. 14:1-2 Greeks - probably proselytes as opposed to unbelieving Gentiles in Verse 2.
2. 14:2-5 Same problem with Jews as with the Jews in Antioch of Pisidia. Barnabas is called an apostle here. The term apostle is used in two ways in the new testament:
 - 1) Specific - as an Apostle of Jesus - an office for the 12, later to include Paul. These were the inspired men that Christ gave the task of teaching his church.
 - 2) General - any missionary who is spreading the gospel. It is used in the general sense in this passage.
3. 14:6-7 It isn't bad to flee to save your life. Lystra and Derbe were cities in the district of Lycaonia. They were probably more remote than Iconium and did not contain enough Jews to have a Synagogue.
4. 14:9 In this case, Paul waited until he detected faith on the part of the lame man that Paul could heal him before healing him.
5. 14:11-13 Note the response that Paul and Barnabas must be gods.
Zeus (Greek - Jupiter, Roman) - The Supreme God
Hermes (Greek - Mercury, Roman) - The spokesman for the gods

Legend was that Jupiter and Mercury visited a village near this area. Seeking hospitality, they were rejected by thousands only to befriend by a poor couple who were unaware that they were deities. They were rewarded and the others were destroyed. These people didn't want that to happen again.

6. 14:13 Garlands of flowers were designed to fit the forms of the oxen about to be sacrificed.
7. 14:14 The tearing of clothes was a custom to show great anguish.
8. 14:15 "Vain things" - man made religious acts - Mk 7:7.
9. 14:19 "Jews", those who had opposed him before followed him here. They were not content to run him out of their own city.
10. 14:20 There is no record of problems in Derbe.
11. 14:23 They appointed elders (plural) in every church. God's plan is that there be more than one elder in each congregation. This helps prevent one man rule (dictator). Read I Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9.

The terms "elder", "bishop" (overseer) and "pastor" are used

interchangeably in the Bible.

- Elder: Greek, “prebuterous” - English and Russian, “presbyter” or “elder”. An older man (implies maturity).
- Bishop: Greek, “episkopos” - Latin, “Bishop” English, “overseer” - Russian, “bishop”. A Superintendent or Supervisor, one who oversees.
- Pastor: Greek, “poimen” - Latin, “Pastor” - Russian, “pastor” - English, a “shepherd” or “feeder”. One who feeds a flock.

These three terms are not titles but descriptions of different aspects of the office. Elders are to be older (mature) men who oversee the congregation and are responsible for the feeding of the flock. In Titus 1:5, Paul instructs Titus to appoint elders and then in 1:7, calls them overseers (Bishops). In Acts 20:28, the Bishops (overseers) are told to pastor (feed) the flock.

The qualifications are a “must”. Each man must meet all of them. The Greek language is imperative. Some are relative and some are absolute.

Example:

- Relative - farmer may be capable of teaching other rural people, but in moving to an urban area may not be able to teach people in such a more sophisticated environment.
- Absolute - the husband of one wife and believing children (Christian) are absolutes. A man who has not reared his children to be Christians and who has not demonstrated an ability to control his own house cannot be expected to rule properly over God’s house. I Tim. 3:5.

The pastoral system that most churches use and the hierarchy that many churches have is foreign to the New Testament Church. Most modern day pastors do not meet the Biblical requirements for elders. Each congregation during New

Testament times was autonomous.

12. 14:27 The first missionary journey of Paul's ended about 48 AD.

Chapter 15

13. 15:1 Judaizing teachers were Christian Jews who believed Christianity was a sect of Judaism and therefore the Law of Moses should be kept in addition to Christianity. Apparently, the former Pharisees, who were legalists, were the major ones behind this.
14. 15:10 Peter points out that the Jews could not keep the Law. Why, then, impose it on the Gentiles?
14. 15:13-19 It is interesting to note that James, not Peter, makes the final pronouncement from this meeting. If Peter were the first Pope, he should be the one making the pronouncements.
15. 15:22 The church in Jerusalem sent witnesses along with Paul and Barnabas to attest to the decision. Silas would later join Paul on the next missionary journey.
16. 15:29 The eating of blood was a basic principle because blood is the life of an animal. Lev. 17:10-14. An animal which has been strangled has not been permitted to bleed. Its blood is still in the body. Therefore, a strangled animal is not to be eaten.
17. 15:33-34 Judas (Barsabbas) and the leading brethren from Jerusalem returned. Silas stays.

Lesson 12 - Acts 15:36-41; 16:1-24

Second Missionary Journey - about 50 AD

1. 15:36-41 This shows that Christians can have legitimate differences of opinions and it may be best at times to go their separate ways in serving the Lord. We do know that Mark did work again years later with Paul (Col. 4:10). We do not know why Mark deserted them on the first trip. Some surmise that the area they were preparing to enter was dangerous because of sparse population and was full of highway men who robbed and killed travelers and Mark was afraid.

Barnabas and Mark took a southern route (by sea) while Paul and Silas took an overland route through Cilicia (southern Turkey).

Chapter 16

2. 16:3 Read Gal. 2:1-5 Paul had Timothy circumcised so that he could associate with other Jews and help convert them. He refused to

force Titus to be circumcised because it was a doctrinal point with the Judaizing teachers who insisted it was necessary for salvation. Paul would have defeated his argument that we are not under the Law of Moses if he had allowed circumcision to be forced on Titus.

Since Timothy was Paul's son in the faith (I Tim. 1:2), he must have baptized him on the first missionary journey.

3. 16:6, 7 Asia was a province in what is now southwestern Turkey. Bithynia is the province north of Asia. The Holy Spirit obviously had other plans for them. Consult a map.
4. 16:8 Troas - ancient city of Troy - Luke joins Paul here. Note: before Luke wrote "they" - now as he joins Paul, he writes "we". Luke went with Paul to Philippi and remained there (Acts 17:1). He joined Paul again 6 years later (Acts 20:6)
5. 16:12 Philippi named for Philip of Macedonia, the father of Alexandria the Great. He had united the Greek states and laid the foundation for Alexander to build his empire.

This is the first place in Europe to receive the Gospel. It was a Roman Colony and enjoyed Roman citizenship.

6. 16:13 There were not enough Jews in Philippi for a Synagogue. Jewish women met on the river bank on the Sabbath for prayer.
7. 16:14 Lydia - a worshiper of God. This denotes her as being a proselyte to Judaism instead of being a Jew. Purple was the royal color and very expensive. Thyatira was in the region called "Lydia" and was noted for the production of purple dye.
8. 16:15 Lydia and her household were baptized. Some use this as a proof text for infant baptism. Note the following:
 - 1) There is no indication she was married. Being a business woman, it is more probable that she was not.
 - 2) There is no indication that she had any children.
 - 3) The term household included servants and slaves, not just children and spouses.Even the Catholic encyclopedia admits that this passage cannot be used as a proof text for infant baptism.
9. 16:19-21 The Jews and their religion were particularly obnoxious to the Romans. Although Paul was teaching Christ and not Judaism, the fact he was a Jew made it easier for them to stir up public hate. Court, in those days, was held in the market place, the City Square.
10. 16:22-24 In response to the mob, the officials beat and jailed them without trial.

Lesson 13 - Acts 16:25 - 17:34

11. 16:25 Singing can raise our spirits when we are down. So can prayer.
12. 16:27 The Jailor was ready to kill himself because Roman Law required his life if a prisoner escaped.
13. 16:30 The Jailor realized he was in the presence of someone associated with God. He also realized his lost condition.
15. 16:31-33 Point out that the jailor was at a different point on the road to salvation than the Jews on Pentecost, and therefore, was told to believe which is the first step. He was then told what to believe in Paul's sermon, and as a true believer will always do, (James 2:26) he obeyed. His repentance is evident from his actions in washing their wounds. This was followed by baptism. Contrast this with Acts 2:38 (they already believed) and Acts 22:16 (Paul already believed, he had spent 3 days in penitent prayer).
15. 16:34 It is evident that infants were not involved in the jailor's family. They were told to believe, which infants cannot do, and those baptized rejoiced, which infants cannot do. Even the Catholic church says that this passage cannot be used as proof for infant baptism.
16. 16:37-39 Because of the magistrates' mistreatment of a Roman citizen, Paul made them grovel a little. They could have been severely punished for this violation of Roman Law.
17. 16:40 Luke stays in Philippi as is evident by "they" departed.

Chapter 17

18. 17:1 Thessalonica was the largest city of Macedonia. Named for "Thessalonica" the sister of Alexander the Great. It was a major city of trade which attracted Jews. As usual, Paul went to the synagogue.
19. 17:4 Some Jews were converted along with a large number of God-fearing Greeks. The latter were either influenced to believe in God by the example of the Jews (similar to Cornelius) or were proselytes to Judaism. The women mentioned were Gentiles. As a result, the great majority of this new church were Gentiles (I Thess. 1:9) who formerly worshipped idols.
20. 17:5 As typical, the unconverted Jews became jealous and stirred up the city against them.
21. 17:6-7 Both accusations were true. They were turning the religious world upside down and Jesus was their King.
22. 17:10 Paul and Silas were not in Thessalonica much more than three weeks.
23. 17:11-12 The Jews in Berea were much more open-minded. As a result, many believed along with prominent gentiles.
24. 17:13 The Jews in Thessalonica were not content to leave Paul alone.
25. 17:14-15 Paul left Silas and Timothy to minister to the Berean church for a short time before they were asked to join him in Athens.

26. 17:16 Athens was the center of Greek idol worship.
27. 17:18 Epicureans were the hedonists of their day. Stoics taught that true life was indifferent to sorrows and pleasures. These two groups were the true extremes from each other.
28. 17:19 Areopagus (also called Mars Hill) - a prominent rock Summit where the Judges (Areopagites) held court for criminal trials and discussion on grave religious matters.
29. 17:22 Note that Paul starts out by complimenting the Athenians instead of attacking them. He then uses their beliefs to lead into his message. We need to take people where they are and build on that and not be confrontational when we try to get people interested in the Gospel.
30. 17:30 Prior to Christ, God overlooked the ignorance of the Gentiles. The Gentiles were answerable to the principles (the moral principles) of the Law of Moses (not the rituals).

Lesson 14 - Acts 18, 19:1-20

1. Paul wrote I Thessalonians (AD 51) from Corinth after Timothy returned (Acts 18:5) from Macedonia with word that they were having problems with the second coming of Christ. They expected it to happen quickly. Read I Thess. quickly to get its gist.
2. A few months later (AD 52), Paul wrote II Thessalonians to expand on the second coming of Christ. He let them know that Christ will not return until after the Apostasy. Read II Thess. quickly to get its gist.
3. 18:2 The Jews were notorious trouble makers for the Romans. Aquila and Priscilla were instrumental in converting Apollos later. (Chapter 19)
4. 18:3 All Jewish boys were taught a trade. Paul's was tent-making.
5. 18:6 To shake out a garment was a Jewish custom similar to the washing of one's hands (Matt. 27:24)
6. 18:8 Crispus was the leading elder of the synagogue.
7. 18:9 Paul must have been in a state of depression for Christ to speak to him personally. His encouragement caused him to stay 18 months.
8. 18:12-16 Gallio was a brother to Seneca, the famous Roman moralist. Gallio was noted for his integrity. He refused to become a judge of Jewish Law.
9. 18:17 The Greeks apparently became indignant of the Jews' treatment of Paul and seized the new chief elder of the synagogue.
10. 18:22 Paul "went up" meaning to Jerusalem. Jerusalem was on Mt. Zion in a low mountain range. To go to Jerusalem, one always "went up". To go anywhere from Jerusalem, one "went down". After visiting the church in Jerusalem, he returned to Antioch in Syria (his home base) about AD 53.
11. 18:23 Paul starts his third missionary journey about AD 54.

12. 18:24-26 Apollos had been taught by disciples of John the Baptist and knew only his baptism. Aquila and Priscilla who had remained in Ephesus heard him and privately (not embarrassing him in public) taught him more fully. This is a good example that just because a preacher is dynamic and appealing, does not necessarily mean that what he preaches is true. He may truly believe he is right but be wrong.

Chapter 19

11. 19:1-5 Point out that one can be immersed for the wrong reason and his baptism will be invalid. These had been immersed, by John's baptism, which was now invalid and therefore, it didn't save them or put them into Christ (Gal. 3:27). They still needed to be baptized into Christ.

Discuss the fact that 3 baptisms are mentioned in the gospels and in the early years of the church (John's baptism, Holy Spirit baptism, and Christ's baptism). Point out that at the time Paul wrote Ephesians (AD 61) only one baptism (Christ's) baptism using water (see I Pet. 3:21 - which was written about the same time) was still valid. John's baptism was looking to the coming of the church and Holy Spirit baptism (which was a prophetic promise) had been fulfilled in Acts 2 and 10.

12. 19:6 This confirms the information in Acts 8 that the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit came with the laying on of the Apostles' hands.
13. 19:9 The "way" - another term for Christianity. As was typical, Paul was expelled from the synagogue. He had apparently converted a gentile teacher named Tyrannus who allowed Paul to use his school for teaching for about 2 years.
14. 19:18-19 Ephesus was noted as the chief center of magic arts in the whole Roman empire .

50,000 drachmas - one drachma was worth an average day's wage. At \$10 an hour average pay, this would be worth approximately \$4 million.

15. While in Ephesus, Paul heard about problems in the church in Corinth. They had major divisions, condoned immorality, misused their spiritual gifts and corrupted the Lord's Supper. Try to persuade the student to read it quickly to get the general message. Read I Corinthians quickly.

Lesson 15 - (Acts 19:21-41:20)

1. Paul wrote II Corinthians from Macedonia (Acts 20:1-2, II Cor. 8:6, 17).

- He had promised in I Cor. 16:5-6 to visit them shortly which he did. (Acts 20:2-3). Paul had met Titus who informed him that his first letter had accomplished much. However, many of the church leaders in Corinth were questioning his apostleship. Have the student read II Cor. quickly to get its gist.
2. Paul wrote Galatians about this time. It is a contrast of freedom in Christ vs. bondage under the law of Moses. Judaizing teachers were trying to force gentile Christians to also obey the Law of Moses. Have the student read Galatians quickly also to get its gist.
 3. 19:23-27 Paul's preaching began to hit the pocket books of the silversmiths.
 4. 19:28 Ephesus was the major center of worship for Artemis (Roman Goddess - Diana)
 5. 19:29-31 Paul's companions were dragged into the public square (theater) before the officials (Asiarchs). Paul had to be restrained from going into the area.
 6. 19:34 The fact that Alexander was a Jew also caused more favor because the Jews were known to oppose idols.
 7. 19:35-41 The town clerk called the crowd to order and told the crowd to take their complaints to the courts and to disperse before they are arrested for rioting. It was a capital offense in Roman law to start a riot.

Chapter 20

8. While in Greece, Paul wrote Romans to let them know he was on his way to see them. They also had the same problem as the Galatians, those who tried to force the Law of Moses on them.

Paul's basic theme is that we are saved by the mercy of Christ, not the works of the Law of Moses.

Please have the student read the book of Romans also. This is a lot of reading but a quick skim through these books will help to see the problems the early church faced.

9. 20:7 The primary purpose of the assembly each first day of the week, was to partake of the Lord's Supper. This is confirmed by many secular historic writings and is attested to by the Catholic Encyclopedia. Most churches today meet to hear a sermon. Communion is infrequent.
10. 20:17,28 Refer to the various aspects of the eldership in this chapter. In verse 17, Paul calls for the elders to meet with him. In verse 28, he notes that the Holy Spirit has made them (the elders, presbyters) overseers "Bishops". The Greek word is episkopos). He then charges them to shepherd (to "feed" - to "pastor" the church.

Again: Elders are older more mature men who oversee

the church (are bishops) and who are responsible for pastoring (feeding) the church.

11. 20:29,30 Paul warns that from among the leadership of the church an apostasy will arise. Truly, during the second century, the leadership corrupted the organization of the church when they began to elevate one elder above others and call him the bishop. This started the hierarchy that ended with the Roman Pope.

Lesson 16 - Acts 21:1-40; 22:1

1. 21:3 They sailed across the open sea instead of the more common practice of sailing along the coast which was much safer.
2. 21:4 Obviously some disciples in Tyre had the gift of special knowledge through the Holy Spirit. They knew what awaited Paul and were warning him. There was not a message from the spirit for him not to go. This was their advice. We know that a part of God's plan was for him to stand before Caesar (Acts 27:24).
3. 21:4,7,8 The church had spread all up and down the coast (Acts 11:19).
4. 21:8 Philip - converted the Ethiopian eunuch.
5. 21:9 Philip's daughters had the gift of prophecy.
6. 21:10-12 Again, a prophetic warning and a plea from fellow Christians not to go to Jerusalem. This was the second mention of Agabus (Acts 11:28).
7. 21:13 Paul was ready to die for the Lord. Are we that dedicated?
8. 21:13 We should always pray that the Lord's will be done.
9. 21:15 "Up" to Jerusalem.
10. 21:18 Apparently, James was the only apostle remaining in Jerusalem.
11. 21:20-26 This is the most difficult passage in Acts as it appears to contradict Paul's teaching elsewhere on the Law of Moses. Paul's teaching is misrepresented by the Jews. He did not teach that circumcision or other Jewish customs should be abandoned. He just pointed out that these practices had no basis of law under Christ as they had under the Law of Moses. He had Timothy circumcised (Acts 16:3) in order that he might be able to reach Jews. On the other hand, he forbade the circumcision of Titus as a point of law (Gal. 2:3-5). Paul, obviously, saw no conflict in observing the customs (based on the Law of Moses) so long as his salvation was not based on that law. In Romans 14:5-12, Paul points out that observance of special events are a matter of one's own private decision and not to be bound on others.
12. 21:27-30 As in many other places, the Jews from Asia stirred up the crowd against Paul.
13. 21:31-39 The commander was totally ignorant of the problem.
14. 21:40; 22:1-2 It is apparent that the Jews expected Paul, as a non-

native of Jerusalem, to speak in Greek. When he began to speak their mother tongue, they listened intently.

15. 22:3-6 Paul gives his credentials as a Jew reared in strict accord with the law and begins telling of his conversion which we have previously covered.

Lesson 17- Acts 22:17-30: 23:1-35

1. 22:17 The scene jumps to Jerusalem. In this account, the preaching that Paul did in Damascus is omitted (Acts 9:19-25). Reread Acts 9:26-30 for parallel account.
2. 22:18-21 From Paul's speech, one can conclude that he felt very badly about his persecution of the church and had desired, even against his own safety, to stay in Jerusalem to preach his new-found faith. But, Christ had better things for him, instead of letting him become another martyr as would most probably have happened if he had stayed in Jerusalem.
3. 22:22-23 Paul's speech served only to anger the Jews.
4. 22:24-29 The power of Rome was awesome. Even though communications with Rome would take weeks or even months, the iron hand of Rome was obeyed diligently. It was unlawful to put a Roman citizen in chains unless convicted. It was unlawful to scourge (cat-of-nine-tails) an uncondemned Roman. The strict enforcement of Roman law was the glue that held the empire together for so many centuries. This is not the first time Paul has used his Roman citizenship to his advantage (Acts 16:37).
5. 23:1 Paul is the ultimate example of how conscience cannot be relied upon as a guide. He lived with a good conscience while persecuting the he thought that was what God wanted. As soon as he learned he was wrong, he changed his conscience so he always was doing what he thought was right. We should never violate our conscience as it is our moral foundation. As soon as we are willing to do things that violate our conscience, we tear down our moral fiber. Even if the things we do may not be sin in themselves, if we engage in such when we feel that they are wrong, we compromise our principles and then open the door to violations of conscience in other areas where it is sin. If our conscience is mis-trained, we must correct it as Paul did. We must be willing to change our mind when presented with facts concerning the truth. Then, we can continue as Paul did, to have a good conscience although we have been wrong previously.
6. 23:2-5 A basic principle; Give respect to those in authority even when they are wrong. Read Romans 13:1-7. This is an instruction to obey an evil government. The Christian must be a law-abiding citizen even if he doesn't like the government, so long as it is not

- in direct conflict with God, Acts 4:19-20; 5:29. Read I Pet. 2:17. Even though Paul no longer recognized the Jewish high priest as his spiritual leader, he realized the need for respect.
7. 23:6-10 Paul knew how to “play the crowd”. He used the basic differences in belief between the Pharisees and Sadducees to his advantage.
 8. 23:11 Paul encouraged by a personal message from his Lord.
 9. 23:12-22 These plotters must have gotten very hungry.
 10. 23:23 Caesarea (named in honor of Caesar) was the seat of Roman Government for Judea. Note the protection provided. Lysias was obviously concerned for Paul’s safety (if Paul were killed, he would have to pay with his life. He was responsible for his prisoners and particularly because Paul was a Roman citizen).
 11. 23:26-30 Lysias lied about the arrest of Paul making it look like a rescue of a Roman when he didn’t learn that he was a Roman until after he was in chains. He passes the buck to the Governor.
 12. 23:35 Paul was kept in the Governor’s official residence.

Lesson 18 - Acts 24 - 25

1. 24:2-3 Notice how Tertullus butters up Felix.
2. 24:11-13 Paul had been arrested on the 5th day he was in Jerusalem. He had not taken part in any public discussions and therefore could not have caused the riot.
3. 24:16 Again, Paul points out that he strove always to have a blameless conscience.
4. 24:17-21 The Jews from Asia who caused the riot should have been present to accuse Paul.
5. 25:23 Paul received special treatment indicating that Felix wasn’t convinced he was a problem.
6. 24:24-27 Felix (a Roman) was married to a Jew (Druscilla), the daughter of Herod Agrippa I. She was a woman of remarkable beauty, the lawful wife of Azizus, king of Emesa. Tacitus testified that Felix “with every kind of cruelty and lust, he exercised the authority of a king with the temple of a slave”. It was in this environment that Paul preached righteousness, temperance and judgment to come. Felix feared but not enough to obey. He did as many do, put off the decision. In so doing, he made his decision as we have no record that he ever responded. He was looking for a bribe to free Paul. When this didn’t happen, he tried to keep the Jews happy by keeping Paul in prison.
7. 25:1 Porcius Festus goes to Jerusalem to meet the leaders of his constituents.
8. 25:7 Charges were unjustified.
9. 25:8-12 Paul knew the Jews would find a way to kill him if he went back to Jerusalem, so he appealed as a Roman citizen to Caesar. Again, note the awesome power of Rome even in this remote province.

10. 25:18-19 Festus did not understand the problem.
11. 25:23 Agrippa - King Herod Agrippa II, son of Agrippa I who died of worms (Acts 12:21-23) and great-grandson of Herod the Great. Bernice was a sister to Agrippa II and Druscilla. She was living in an illicit relationship with Agrippa II. She later became a mistress to Titus, the son of the emperor Vespasian.
12. 25:25 Festus could not find him guilty of any serious crime.
13. 25:26-27 Festus needed someone who understood the Jews to help him write a letter of charges.

Lesson 19 - Acts 26:24-30, Acts 27

1. 26:1-23 Paul's conversion previously covered in Lesson 7.
2. 26:24 Festus accused Paul of being out of his mind.
3. 26:28 Agrippa - "For a little bit you would try to persuade me to become a Christian wouldn't you?"
4. 27:1 Luke is traveling with Paul as evidenced by the "we". Follow this on a map.
5. 27:3 It is evident that Paul was not considered a common criminal by the way he was treated.
6. 27:9 The Feast - Yom Kippur (day of atonement) in late September or early October.
7. 27:10 Paul's message went unheeded.
8. 27:13-15 They were blown away from Crete into the open sea.
9. 27:17 Syrtis - shallows off the coast of North Africa. Very dreaded by sailors.
10. 27:22-26 God sends a message to Paul.
11. 27:30-32 The soldiers cut the ropes to keep the sailors from leaving them.
12. 27:37 This was a very large ship for its time.
13. 27:42 By killing the prisoners, the soldiers would not be in danger of their lives because they had allowed prisoners to escape. Roman law allowed no excuses for allowing prisoners to escape.
14. 27:43 The centurion had developed great confidence in Paul.

Lesson 20 - Acts 28

1. 28:1 Malta - they had been blown 500-600 Miles (800 - 1000 km) out of the way (14 days).
2. 28:3 It was now late enough in the fall for snakes to be impacted by the cold weather. When it was warmed by the fire, it became active.
3. 28:4 The natives believed in divine justice. That is, fate would punish any guilty person.
4. 28:6 How quickly people can change their mind. Now, Paul is a "god".
5. 28:11 After wintering at Malta, they set sail for Rome again. The figure head was Castor and Pollux, the twin sons of Zeus (Gemini). It was now about February.

6. 28:13 Puteoli was the principle port south of Rome on the bay of Naples. Grainery ships from North Africa unloaded here.
7. 28:14 During the seven days Paul remained here, word of his arrival reached Rome.
8. 28:15 They traveled on the famous "Appian Way" built by Appius Claudius in 300 B.C. It was 18 ft. (6 m.) wide and consisted of huge blocks of lava on crushed stone cemented together with lime. It ran from Rome 150-200 miles (240-320 km) to the southeast coast of Italy. Parts of it are still in use today. The market of Appius was 43 miles (70 km) south of Rome and the Three Taverns 33 miles (50 km) south of Rome. Two groups met Paul. Point out that although there were Christians at Rome (and had the Holy Spirit, Acts 2:38, Rom. 8:9) they needed spiritual gifts which only Paul or another apostle could give by the laying on of apostolic hands (Acts 8:17). This was needed in order for them to be properly established since they had no complete New Testament yet to read and use for doctrine. This contradicts the doctrine that Peter founded the church in Rome, for if he had founded the church there, he would have imparted sufficient gifts to establish them at the time he founded the work.
9. 28:16 Paul was obviously a very special prisoner. We don't know what Festus had written but he was placed on house arrest instead of going to prison.
10. 28:17 There were seven synagogues in Rome at this time.
11. 28:20 Although he was under house arrest, he was still chained.
12. 28:24 As in other cities, some accepted and some rejected the gospel just as many do today.
13. 28:30 During his prison stay, Paul wrote his prison epistles: Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians and Philemon (Eph. 6:20; Phil. 1:7, 4:22; Col. 4:3; Philemon 9), Colossians and Philemon were carried by the same messengers (Eph. 6:21, Col. 4:7-9, Philemon 10-12). Please take the time to read them quickly. During this time, Luke, Timothy, Epaphras, Mark, Aristarchus and Tychicus were with Paul.
14. 28:31 At the close of Acts, Paul had been in custody for at least four years (two in Caesarea and two in Rome + travel time).
15. We do not know what happened to Paul. Tradition says he was freed and traveled to Spain. Later, was arrested again and killed by Nero. It is thought that he wrote II Timothy during his second imprisonment. Read I and II Timothy and Titus to round out your reading of Paul's epistles.